



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP22-44-000]

Equitrans, L.P.; Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for The
Proposed **Ohio Valley Connector Expansion Project**, Request for Comments on
Environmental Issues, and Schedule for Environmental Review

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the Ohio Valley Connector Expansion Project (Project) involving construction and operation of facilities by Equitrans, L.P. (Equitrans) in Greene County, Pennsylvania, Wetzel County, West Virginia, and Monroe County, Ohio. The Commission will use this EIS in its decision-making process to determine whether the Project is in the public convenience and necessity. The schedule for preparation of the EIS is discussed in the Schedule for Environmental Review section of this notice.

As part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process, the Commission takes into account concerns the public may have about proposals and the environmental impacts that could result whenever it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. This gathering of public input is referred to as “scoping.” By notice issued on May 23, 2022, in Docket No. CP22-44-000, the Commission opened a scoping period to solicit comments. Commission staff intends to prepare an EIS that will address the concerns raised during the scoping process and comments received in response to this notice.

As mentioned above, the Commission opened a scoping period which expired on June 22, 2022; however, Commission staff continued to accept comments after the comment period closed. All substantive written and oral comments provided will be addressed in the EIS. Therefore, if you submitted comments on this Project to the Commission during the previous scoping period, **you do not need to file those comments again.**

By this notice, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of issues to address in the EIS, including comments on potential alternatives and impacts, and any relevant information, studies, or analyses of any kind concerning impacts affecting the quality of the human environment. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please submit your comments so that the Commission receives them in Washington, DC on or before 5:00 pm Eastern Time on **August 8, 2022**. Comments may be submitted in written form. Further details on how to submit comments are provided in the Public Participation section of this notice.

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, a pipeline company representative may contact you about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed facilities. The company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable easement agreement. You are not required to enter into an agreement. However, if the Commission approves the Project, the Natural Gas Act conveys the right of eminent domain to the company. Therefore, if you and the company do not reach an easement agreement, the pipeline company could initiate condemnation proceedings in court. In such instances, compensation would be determined by a judge in accordance with state law. The Commission does not grant, exercise, or oversee the exercise of eminent domain authority. The courts have exclusive authority to handle eminent domain cases; the Commission has no jurisdiction over these matters.

Equitrans provided landowners with a fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled “An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?” which addresses typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain and how to participate in the Commission’s proceedings. This fact sheet along with other landowner topics of interest are available for viewing on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov) under the Natural Gas Questions or Landowner Topics link.

Public Participation

There are three methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has staff available to assist you at (866) 208-3676 or FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

- 1) You can file your comments electronically using the [eComment](#) feature, which is located on the Commission’s website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to FERC Online. Using eComment is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;
- 2) You can file your comments electronically by using the [eFiling](#) feature, which is located on the Commission’s website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to FERC Online. With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on “[eRegister](#).” You will be asked to select the type of filing you are making; a comment on a particular project is considered a “Comment on a Filing”; or
- 3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the Commission. Be sure to reference the project docket number (CP22-44-000) on your letter. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, MD 20852.

Additionally, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription. This service provides automatic notification of filings made to subscribed dockets, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to <https://www.ferc.gov/ferc-online/overview> to register for eSubscription.

Project Purpose and Need, Summary of Facilities, and Expected Impacts

According to Equitrans, its Project would expand Equitrans' existing Ohio Valley Connector assets to deliver approximately 350,000 dekatherms per day of incremental firm natural gas transportation to mid-continent and Gulf Coast markets along the Rockies Express and Rover pipeline systems.

Equitrans proposes to acquire and operate the existing non-jurisdictional Cygrymus Compressor Station, located in Greene County, Pennsylvania, and install two new turbines. Equitrans would also install one additional compressor unit each at the existing Corona Compressor Station Wetzel County, West Virginia and at the existing Plasma Compressor Station in Monroe County, Ohio. Equitrans would also construct approximately 5.5 miles of pipeline and ancillary facilities in different locations related to the compressor stations. Specifically, the Project would consist of the following facilities in:

Greene County, Pennsylvania

- addition of two Taurus 70 turbines at the existing Cygrymus Compressor Station;
- approximately 0.5 mile of 16-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (H-327);
- approximately 0.5-mile of 12-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (H-328);
- a deep anode groundbed and rectifier; and
- ancillary facilities, such as a valve yard, taps, and internal inspection device (e.g., pig¹) launchers and receivers.

Wetzel County, West Virginia

- addition of one Mars 100 compressor at the existing Corona Compressor Station;
- approximately 3.7 miles of new 24-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (H-326);
- approximately 129 feet of new 8-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (H-329);
- approximately 0.7 mile of new 16-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (H-330);
- approximately 0.09 mile of new 16-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (H-330 Spur);
- approximately 160 feet of new 12-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (Logansport Spur); and

¹ A "pig" is a tool that the pipeline company inserts into and pushes through the pipeline for cleaning the pipeline, conducting internal inspections, or other purposes.

- ancillary facilities, such as mainline valves, valve yards, measuring equipment, and internal inspection device (pig launchers and receivers).

Monroe County, Ohio

- addition of one Titan 130 compressor at the existing Plasma Compressor Station.

The general location of the Project facilities is shown in appendix 1.²

Based on the environmental information provided by Equitrans, construction of the proposed facilities would disturb about 117 acres of land for the aboveground facilities and the pipeline. Following construction, Equitrans would maintain about 32 acres for operation of the Project facilities; the remaining acreage would be restored and revert to former uses. The proposed H-326, H-330, and H-330 spur pipelines would be collocated with existing pipelines for approximately 58.8 percent, 76.8 percent, and 88.9 percent of the proposed alignments, respectively, and the H-327 and H-328 pipelines are parallel and would be located within a shared pipeline construction right-of-way.

Based on an initial review of Equitrans' proposal and public comments received during scoping, Commission staff have identified several expected impacts that deserve attention in the EIS. The Project would impact 13 waterbodies and about 0.4 acre of wetland habitat. Operation of the Project would result in emissions estimated at 6.77 million metric tonnes per year of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the end use of the natural gas. Construction of the Project would also have impacts on noise, traffic, and road conditions. In response to the Notice of Scoping, the Commission received comments from the Teamsters National Pipeline Labor Management Cooperation Trust (Teamsters); Center for Coalfield Justice (Coalfield Justice); the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). The Teamsters comments were supportive of the Project. Primary issues raised by the Coalfield Justice include potential Project impacts on environmental justice communities; especially in Greene County, Pennsylvania; and climate change and air quality concerns. The EPA stated that the environmental document should discuss project need and alternatives; potential impacts on water quality and wetlands; air quality, climate change, and greenhouse gas emissions; community, social, and economic impacts, including environmental justice communities; and the impacts on the potential impact of local residents. The USFWS comments included potential Project impacts on federally listed species, including ferruginous and other endangered birds, and the impacts on mussels, migratory birds, and bald eagle. The Commission has suspended access to the Commission's Public Reference Room due to the proclamation declaring a National Emergency concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), issued by the President on March 13, 2020. For assistance, contact FERC at FERCOOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or call toll free, (886) 208-3676 or TTY (202) 502-8659.

The NEPA Process and the EIS

The EIS issued by the Commission will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed Project under the relevant general resource areas:

- geology and soils;
- water resources and wetlands;
- vegetation and wildlife;
- threatened and endangered species;
- cultural resources;
- land use and visual impacts;
- socioeconomics and environmental justice;
- air quality and climate change;
- noise; and
- reliability and safety.

Commission staff will also make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas, and will review alternatives as discussed further below. Your comments will help Commission staff focus its analysis on the issues that may have a significant effect on the human environment.

The EIS will present Commission staff's independent analysis of the issues. Staff will prepare a draft EIS which will be issued for public comment. Commission staff will consider all timely comments received during the comment period on the draft EIS and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a final EIS. Any draft and final EIS will be available in electronic format in the public record through eLibrary³ and the Commission's natural gas environmental documents webpage (<https://www.ferc.gov/industries-data/natural-gas/environment/environmental-documents>). If eSubscribed, you will receive instant email notification when the environmental document is issued.

Alternatives Under Consideration

The EIS will evaluate reasonable alternatives that are technically and economically feasible and meet the purpose and need for the proposed action.⁴ Alternatives currently under consideration include:

- the no-action alternative, meaning the Project is not implemented;
- one route alternative for the H-327 and H-328 Pipelines and two route alternatives for the H-326 Pipeline; and
- electric motor-driven compression.

³ For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the last page of this notice.

⁴ 40 CFR 1508.1(z).

With this notice, the Commission requests specific comments regarding any additional potential alternatives to the proposed action or segments of the proposed action. Please focus your comments on reasonable alternatives (including alternative facility sites and pipeline routes) that meet the Project objectives, are technically and economically feasible, and avoid or lessen environmental impact.

Consultation Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Commission is using this notice to initiate consultation with the applicable State Historic Preservation Office(s), and other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public to solicit their views and concerns regarding the Project's potential effects on historic properties.⁵ The Project EIS will document findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

Schedule for Environmental Review

On February 11, 2022, the Commission issued its Notice of Application for the Project. Among other things, that notice alerted other agencies issuing federal authorizations of the requirement to complete all necessary reviews and to reach a final decision on the request for a federal authorization within 90 days of the date of issuance of the Commission staff's final EIS for the Project. This notice identifies the Commission staff's planned schedule for completion of the final EIS for the Project, which is based on an issuance of the draft EIS in September 2022.

Issuance of Notice of Availability of the final EIS	January 20, 2023
90-day Federal Authorization Decision Deadline ⁶	April 20, 2023

If a schedule change becomes necessary for the final EIS, an additional notice will be provided so that the relevant agencies are kept informed of the Project's progress.

Permits and Authorizations

—The table below lists the anticipated permits and authorizations for the Project required under federal law. This list may not be all-inclusive and does not preclude any permit or Federal Regulations Part 1800. These Agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise may formally cooperate in the preparation of the Commission's EIS and may also be required to satisfy National NEPA requirements related to this Project. Agencies

⁶ The Commission's deadline applies to the decisions of other federal agencies, and state agencies acting under federally delegated authority, that are responsible for federal authorizations, permits, and other approvals necessary for proposed projects under the Natural Gas Act. Per 18 CFR 157.22(a), the Commission's deadline for other agency's decisions applies unless a schedule is otherwise established by federal law.

that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided under the Public Participation section of this notice.

Agency	Permit
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity.
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Pittsburgh District	Pennsylvania (PA) State Programmatic General Permit – 6.
USACE Huntington West Virginia (WV) District	Nationwide Permit 12/Individual Permit
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) PA Field Office	Endangered Species Act (ESA) Consultation; Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Coordination; Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) Coordination; Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) Consultation.
USFWS – WV Field Office	ESA Consultation, and MBTA and BGEPA Coordination.
USFWS – Ohio (OH) Field Office	ESA Consultation, and MBTA and BGEPA Coordination.
PA Department of Environmental Protection - Regional Permitting Coordination Office	Section 401 Water Quality Certificate.
PA State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Section 106 Consultation.
WV Department of Environmental Protection Division of Water and Waste Management	Section 401 Water Quality Certificate.
WV SHPO	NHPA, Section 106 Consultation.
OH Environmental Protection Agency	Clean Water Act, Section 401.
OH SHPO	NHPA, Section 106 Consultation.

Environmental Mailing List

This notice is being sent to the Commission’s current environmental mailing list for the Project which includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American Tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission’s regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for Project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits comments on the Project and includes a mailing address with their comments. Commission staff will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that Commission notices related to this environmental review are sent to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed Project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this proposed Project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

If you need to make changes to your name/address, or if you would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please complete one of the following steps:

- 1) Send an email to GasProjectAddressChange@ferc.gov stating your request. You must include the docket number CP22-44-000 in your request. If you are requesting a change to your address, please be sure to include your name and the correct address. If you are requesting to delete your address from the mailing list, please include your name and address as it appeared on this notice. **This e-mail address is unable to accept comments.**

OR

- 2) Return the attached “Mailing List Update Form” (appendix 2).

Additional Information

Additional information about the Project is available from the Commission’s Office of External Affairs, at **(866) 208-FERC**, or on the FERC website at www.ferc.gov using the eLibrary link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on “General Search” and enter the docket number in the “Docket Number” field, excluding the last three digits (i.e., CP22-44). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of all formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

Public sessions or site visits will be posted on the Commission’s calendar located at <https://www.ferc.gov/news-events/events> along with other related information.

Dated: July 7, 2022.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.